

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) (IEEPA), I hereby report that I have issued an Executive Order (the "order") declaring a national emergency with respect to the unusual and extraordinary threat that significant transnational criminal organizations pose to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States.

Organized crime is no longer a local or regional problem; it has become a danger to international stability. Significant transnational criminal organizations have become increasingly sophisticated and dangerous to the United States, and their activities have reached such scope and gravity that they destabilize the international system. These groups have taken advantage of globalization and other factors to diversify their geographic scope and range of activities. They have increased and deepened their ties to governments and the international financial system, relying not only on bribery and violence, but also more and more on the ability to exploit differences among countries and to create and maintain legal facades to hide illicit activities.

The specific harms that significant transnational criminal organizations threaten today are many. They corrupt—and in some cases co-opt—governments, thereby destabilizing them and weakening democratic institutions and the rule of law. They threaten U.S. economic interests by subverting, exploiting, and distorting legitimate markets, and could gain influence in strategic sectors of the world economy.

Significant transnational criminal organizations that engage in cybercrime threaten sensitive public and private computer networks, undermine the integrity of the international financial system, and impose costs on the American consumer. Those that engage in the theft of intellectual property not only erode U.S. competitiveness, but also endanger the public health and safety through the distribution of tainted and counterfeit goods. Many of them also engage in drug trafficking.

Finally, significant transnational criminal organizations increasingly support the activities of other dangerous persons. Some of these organizations are involved in arms smuggling, which can facilitate and aggravate violent civil conflicts. Others are involved in human smuggling, exacerbating the problem of forced labor. There is also evidence of growing ties between significant transnational criminal organizations and terrorists.

The Executive Order I have issued today is one part of a comprehensive strategy to address the growing threat of transnational organized crime. The order targets significant transnational criminal organizations and the networks that support them, striking at the core of those networks—their abil-

ity and need to move money. It does this by blocking the property and interests in property of four transnational criminal organizations, listed in the Annex to the order, that currently pose significant threats to U.S. domestic and foreign economic interests, as well as to U.S. promotion of transparency and stability in the international political and financial systems. The order provides criteria for the further blocking of persons determined by the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Attorney General and the Secretary of State:

to be a foreign person that constitutes a significant transnational criminal organization;

to have materially assisted, sponsored, or provided financial, material, or technological support for, or goods or services to or in support of, any person whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to the order; or

to be owned or controlled by, or to have acted or purported to act for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, any person whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to the order.

I have delegated to the Secretary of the Treasury the authority, in consultation with the Attorney General and the Secretary of State, to take such actions, including the promulgation of rules and regulations, and to employ all powers granted to the President by IEEPA as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of the order.

The order is effective at 12:01 a.m. eastern daylight time on July 25, 2011. All executive agencies of the United States Government are directed to take all appropriate measures within their authority to carry out the provisions of the order.

I am enclosing a copy of the Executive Order I have issued.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, July 24, 2011.

RECOGNIZING BARRY WONENBERG

(Mr. SABLAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, 50 years ago, President Kennedy observed that "the life of the arts, far from being an interruption, a distraction, in the life of a nation, is very close to the center of a nation's purpose—and is a test of the quality of a nation's civilization."

I ask you to join me today in recognizing Barry Wonenberg, an artist in the Northern Mariana Islands, who very much embodies the ideal of which the President spoke, and who, through his avocations as both artist and educator, has, for more than 20 years, broadened our community's appreciation of art, creativity, and culture—and encouraged others to explore, and achieve in, artistic endeavors as well.

Today, Barry is representing the United States at the 12th International

Sculpture Symposium in Changchun, China. Artists from 96 different countries are creating sculptures there which will be added to some 500 sculptures already exhibited in that city from previous symposia. We all watch the progress on the massive clay sculpture Barry is creating, wish him well, and thank him for representing the Northern Marianas and America with such distinction.

Fifty years ago, President Kennedy observed that "the life of the arts, far from being an interruption, a distraction, in the life of a nation, is very close to the center of a nation's purpose—and is a test of the quality of a nation's civilization." I ask you to join me today in recognizing Barry Wonenberg, an artist in the Northern Mariana Islands who very much embodies the ideal of which the President spoke, and who, through his avocations as both artist and educator has, for more than 20 years, broadened our community's appreciation of art, creativity, and culture—and encouraged others to explore, and achieve in, artistic endeavors as well.

Barry came to the Commonwealth in 1989 under an artist-in-residence contract and he initially aided in the design of lesson plans and textbooks for the local public school system, including the first-ever Northern Marianas History textbook. Not long thereafter, Barry accepted a teaching position at Northern Marianas College, where he developed a ceramics program and has assisted in the development of other arts-related curricula.

Barry's true passion as an artist, and the area in which he has inspired most students, though, remains sculpture and pottery—which he has been crafting for 35 years. As in most cultures around the world, these arts represent a tangible link to our local historical past. The mediums also inspire exploration, consideration, and interpretation of the natural beauty that abounds in our contemporary island environment.

Barry's passion for pottery has led to local and international distinction. In 2003, Barry was a recipient of the Governor's Humanities Award in the CNMI. He was celebrated for bringing local cultural elements of design into the vision of the contemporary artist, which has aided the preservation of a primary indigenous cultural art.

In 2008, Barry was one of 31 sculptors worldwide invited to participate in the International Sculpture Symposium in Changchun, China. His ten-foot-high bronze and stainless steel sculpture has a permanent place in the Changchun World Sculpture Park, which is home to hundreds of sculptures from artists around the world. In 2010 he was again chosen to represent the Northern Mariana Islands at the Symposium. Out of 1,060 submissions from around the world, 29 artists were selected to attend the Symposium. Of those 29 artists, four were chosen to create two works of art each. Barry was one of those four.

Barry's artistic talents have also benefitted our island community in some very real and significant ways. For example, he joined with others to transform a underutilized area of our local hospital into a calming therapeutic garden for psychiatric patients. He also served as an advisor to a group that worked to apply for, and receive, funding through NOAA's Prescott Grant Program to engage in a regional study

of marine mammal stranding, which will include the development of an interpretive display of the skeletons of marine mammals recovered from the waters around our islands. In aid of local charitable fundraising efforts, Barry also regularly contributes his work for auction or raffle by social service organizations in the Commonwealth.

Today, as a nation, we face challenges to the arts—for both financial and ideological reasons. I hope that we all consider the nexus between the arts and our civilization, globally and locally, as we debate the issues. And I also hope that you will join me in paying tribute to Barry Wonenberg—who has spent much of his life, to the benefit of the Northern Mariana Islands, practicing what President Kennedy preached.

TRIBUTE TO TERRY R. GORSUCH

(Mr. TIPTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an American hero. Not a hero in our typical sense of the word but in a context of heroism that we have seen replicated across the face of this great Nation. Today, Mr. Speaker, I pay tribute to Terry R. Gorsuch.

He was a man who embodied the characteristics that we rightly honor in our country. He worked hard, overcame adversity, and in business he innovated. He risked all and, by the grace of God and through perseverance, was rewarded with his successful company, Triad Western Constructors.

The story could stop there, but he believed his greatest accomplishment and blessing in life was his family—married to his loving wife, Rita, for 45 years, raising their two children, Traci and Terry D., and then seeing their children grow to adulthood, marry, and blessed the family with two grandchildren, Gracine and Jaydine.

Terry R. Gorsuch lived the American Dream. He worked hard, played by the rules, loved his family, and always extended a helping hand to others. He could not win his final battle as he succumbed to Lou Gehrig's disease, but his admirable moral fiber held firm even as the final sands of his time slipped from beneath his feet.

We don't often reflect on the heroes who make this country work and help make this country what it is, but today, Mr. Speaker, I am proud to honor an American hero, Terry R. Gorsuch.

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CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, this evening the Congressional Black

Caucus is pleased that our Democratic leadership has given us the opportunity to once again come to the floor for the first Democratic hour this evening.

I want to just talk a little bit about some of the people who came and visited me in my office in my district this morning. I had a visit from AARP leadership and some of their advocates and volunteers this morning in my St. Croix office. They came to bring this petition to the office, signed by hundreds of people just on one of my islands. And it says:

"Dear Members of Congress,

"Seniors and future retirees earned their benefits after a lifetime of hard work and paying into the system. Yet some Members of Congress from both parties are considering harmful cuts to Medicare and Social Security"—I know nobody in the Congressional Black Caucus is considering those kinds of cuts—"as a part of a deal to pay the Nation's bills. A deal like that could dramatically increase health care costs for seniors and future retirees, threaten their access to doctors, hospitals and nursing homes, and reduce benefit checks they rely on to pay the bills.

"Instead of cutting the benefits of seniors and future retirees, Congress should be reducing wasteful spending and closing tax loopholes. Instead of shifting more health care costs to seniors, Congress should be working to hold down health care costs for everyone," as the Democrats worked very hard to do last year when we passed the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

So these undersigned are calling on us to oppose any deal that would make harmful cuts to the Medicare and Social Security benefits Americans have been working on for all these years. And this is just the beginning, Mr. Speaker and colleagues. There will be more of these petitions to come.

Some of the participants that came to my office this morning are: Aloma Peters, Lucie Rodriguez, Elizabeth Torruella, Nicolas Encarnacion, Luz D. Sierra, Theodora Moorehead, Ann Thomas, Ellarine Batiste, Joan Sackey, Miguel Ramos, Ramomta Cagnes, Doris Brown, Paul Simmonds, Denyce Singleton, Genny Dargan, and Lumoz Ayala, but representing the hundreds of people that sent this petition to the Congress of the United States.

In my district, and they talked about this this morning, we have one of the highest utility bills in our country, and they're just trying to figure out what they would do if their Social Security checks were not coming to them next month.

But a default is not just catastrophic for individuals on Social Security. It would be catastrophic for everyone. It's catastrophic for our Nation and our economy. The poor, of course, would lose their safety net and the ability to pull themselves out of poverty, the help that they need.

And the middle class will also pay a price. It would be so catastrophic that

mortgage payments would increase by over \$1,000 for the average family. Credit card interest would increase by \$250 for the average family. Families could pay an additional \$182 per year on utilities. I'm sure our utilities in the Virgin Islands would be much higher than that. And families could pay an additional \$318 per year on food. They could lose thousands of dollars in their retirement savings.

We are so proud and honored to have a leader like Leader NANCY PELOSI, who has represented us in all of the discussions at the White House, and has stood strong for Democratic priorities and kept the voices of House Democrats and the interests of the American people on the table.

We have heard of two different proposals that are coming forth this evening. It's interesting that Speaker BOEHNER has brought forth a proposal with, still, no tax hikes. We were never talking about tax hikes, Mr. Speaker. We were talking about letting the temporary Bush tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans expire, as they were always intended to expire.

His proposal speaks about entitlement reforms and savings. I just read the letter from the AARP, the petition, at least in part, which calls on us to save Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. Yet the Republican proposal would include entitlement reforms and savings.

And again, here comes the balanced budget amendment, a budget amendment that would be required before the end of the year. And then a short-term lifting of the debt ceiling, something that will not bring the stability to our economy and that would still put our credit in the world at risk.

He says it's a two-step approach to hold President Obama accountable. Is that what this is all about? Or is it that we're trying to restore the good faith and credit of this Nation?

Their two-step approach to hold President Obama accountable, I don't think he needs to be held accountable. He's been a good President, and he doesn't need us to help him be accountable.

They have cuts. They want cuts that exceed the debt hike, the hike in the debt ceiling. I think that's a new one. I thought that originally we talked about having a balance between the lifting of the debt ceiling and the cuts.

Caps to control future spending. Well, we know what that would mean. All the programs that our communities, the communities that we represent, would lose funding for programs that they need. Again, here comes the balanced budget amendment and entitlement reforms and, of course, no tax hikes.

Now, I've been joined by several of my colleagues, and I'd like them to join in this Special Order if they are ready at this point in time. And I'm always pleased to be joined on these Monday evenings by the gentlelady from Houston, Texas, Congresswoman